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17

A CRITICISM

OF THE

New Lectionary

PROPOSED BY THE

RITUAL COMMISSIONERS.

By AN M.A.

OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD.

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REPORT

ON THE

PROGRESS OF THE

WORK OF THE

COMMISSIONERS OF THE

LAND OFFICE

FOR THE YEAR

1880-81

AND

THE

REVENUE

OF THE

LANDS

OF THE

INDIAN

RESERVES

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CRITICISM.

The new Lectionary compiled by the Ritual Commissioners has been declared by themselves to be a compromise: an expression which must be taken to mean that so much of the Bible was admitted as the different parties among the Commissioners could agree upon, and that every thing else was left out. Otherwise, it is difficult to understand why the chief miracles in the wilderness have been entirely struck out of the Lessons for Sundays and Festivals, and the whole doctrine of Easter has been so watered down, as will be found to be the case. But surely it is not thus that Christ's Church should feed her children, and especially the young, poor, and ignorant of her flock, out of the Word of Life. And if these Commissioners have not exactly garbled that Holy Word, yet they have at any rate cut and carved it after a fashion that savours little of sound judgment, and still less of reverence.

How little the Clergy in general were consulted on this question, is proved by the following statement of *facts* :—

1.—Extract from a letter of one of the Commissioners :—"As regards the Lectionary, it was our wish that it should be criticised as much as possible. We sent it (in the first place) to every Bishop and Dean, necessarily as *confidential*, but we certainly supposed that the Bishops would gather their Rural Deans and the experts among the Clergy, and discuss it in a private way, and send us the results. We were disappointed at the comparatively slight attention it received, but we did get many valuable suggestions." So far, therefore, before the new Lectionary was published in the name and authority of the Ritual Commissioners, its contents were unknown to all except the Bishops, Deans, and Professors of Theology; who

certainly took no steps to carry out the wishes of the Commissioners by gathering the opinions of the Clergy in general about it.

2.—It was first *published* in the *Guardian*, of February 2nd, 1870, just one month before the beginning of Lent; a time of year at which the Parochial Clergy have little chance of meeting together to discuss such topics.

3.—In Easter-week, a Committee of Convocation was summoned, to consider the new Lectionary previously to its being submitted to Convocation; *but* this Committee was *packed* with a large infusion of the the Ritual^a Commissioners themselves; in consequence (perhaps?) of which precaution, the said Committee agreed, after a discussion of less than two^b hours, to recommend it for adoption by Convocation without any alteration; although, with the sole exceptions of Christmas Day and All Saints, there is not one Sunday or other Festival, or even any day throughout the year, on which additions or alterations, greater or less, have not been made in the old Lessons.

4.—The Lectionary was then brought before Convocation at the first moment possible—within a fortnight of Easter; and, as every one knows, was forced through the Lower House in a manner wholly unprecedented and even unconstitutional. When member after member rose to ask for more time to consider so large and important a subject, very little more, either of answer or of argument, was vouchsafed by its promoters than the *threat*, that if they did not pass it *then*, it would be passed elsewhere without them. And finally, it was carried only by the casting vote of the Prolocutor.

If, however, the alterations made in the new Lectionary had been merely of a formal character, or to supply obvious deficiencies

^a On the authority of a Member of the Committee.

^b As publicly stated afterwards in Convocation.

in the old, all this violent haste and hurry would have been of less consequence; but this is by no means the case, for they are not only often wholly uncalled for, but even such as to affect some of the most vital points of Christianity: see especially the entire alteration of the old Lessons for Easter.

The changes proposed in the New List of Lessons for the Sundays and chief seasons of the year may be classed under two heads:—1. Of addition of new chapters; 2. Of omission of chapters formerly read.

	New chaps. (or parts of chaps.) added.	Old ones omitted.
1.—In the Pentateuch - - -	14	15
In the later historical books- -	41	13
In the books of Prov., Eccclus., Job	8	7
In the prophetical books - -	40	15
Total	103	50

Of the additional Lessons thus provided, the most worthy of notice are as follows:—

Those which have been added on Ash-Wednesday, and throughout Holy-Week, see page 14.

On Easter Eve, a prophecy from Hosea of our Lord's Resurrection on the third day.

In Easter Week, Ezekiel 37, a vision of the resurrection of dry bones.

On Ascension Day, Daniel 7, v. 9-15, a vision of the Ancient of Days, in the stead of Deuteronomy 5, v. 10.

At Whitsuntide, Romans 8, v. 1-18, and Galatians 5, v. 1-16, as good practical lessons on the subject of the season; and 1 Corinthians 13, on charity as a special gift of the Holy Ghost, in the stead of 1 Corinthians 14; also Ezekiel 36, v. 25, and Joel 2, v. 21, as prophecies of the out-pouring of the Spirit on the Church.

On Trinity Sunday, Isaiah 6, v. 1-11; and Revelation 1, v. 1-9.

In the seasons of Advent and Epiphany the new Sunday Lessons, added from Isaiah, relate chiefly to the coming of Christ on earth—His work and kingdom among men; the general character

of the old Lessons from Isaiah, which have been struck out, being rather one of severity and denunciation of sin. (Why could not some, at least, of this latter kind have been retained?)

The additional Lessons from the book of Job, at the end of the Epiphany season and at Septuagesima, have for their subject the Almighty Power and the *Wisdom* of God as shewn in His work of Creation. The chapters added from the Pentateuch seem intended to supplement the histories of Noah and of the early Jewish patriarchs, especially Jacob; the miraculous healing by looking on the brazen serpent will also now be read on the 2nd Sunday after Easter. From the book of Joshua are added, the miraculous passing of the Israelites through the river Jordan, and the taking of Jericho. From the book of Judges, the history of Gideon. From 1 Samuel, the death of Eli and his sons; though, curiously enough, the warning prophecy sent to Eli on this subject is struck out. Of the book of Ruth, the first chapter only is added; surely the last chapter should not have been omitted, in order to connect her story with the general history. From 1 Kings, and 1 and 2 Chronicles, several chapters are added about King Solomon, his wisdom, riches, &c., &c., and his fall.—2 Kings furnishes the account of Elisha's chief miracles; and, finally, in 2 Chronicles 36, we read of the captivity of Babylon, and of Cyrus' decree, at the end of the 70 years, for the restoration of God's people. From the prophets Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Micah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, and Malachi, we get 24 new chapters, chiefly in the stead of the book of Proverbs, which in future will hardly ever be heard. Of these 24 new chapters, the most noticeable are Ezekiel 37, on the resurrection of the dry bones; five fresh ones from Daniel, chiefly supplementary of the prophet's history at Babylon; Micah 5, containing the prophecy of our Lord's Birth at Bethlehem; and the prophecies about our Saviour and St. John Baptist in Haggai 2; and Malachi 3 and 4, which three last, however, falling on the 27th Sunday after Trinity, will be heard but seldom.

2.—A careful examination of the appended list of omissions, by the new Lectionary, of many of the old Lessons, will show that the Commissioners' scheme is open to five chief Objections:—

1. A too great abbreviation of many of the new Lessons.
2. (Partly due to 1.) A mutilation (approaching at times to garbling) of the selected passages.
3. The omission of many chapters which declare the certainty and severity of God's judgments against sin.
4. The omission of certain important miracles from the Old Testament.
5. The entire alteration of the Easter Lessons.

OBJECTION I.—If some of the old Lessons were too long, it cannot be denied that many of the new ones are too short. From six to ten verses seems to be a favourite length with the Commissioners, both for the Old and the New Testament Lessons. Twenty-six Lessons may be counted, taken mostly from the list of Sunday Lessons, whose average length is under ten verses; and nine of these have no more than eight; and some only six. Instances of this may be found on Ash-Wednesday, Easter Day and Easter Week, Whitsuntide, Ascension Day, Trinity Sunday, &c., &c. Surely this is a very objectionable way of shortening the Service; for many of the poor, it is to be feared, hear but little of God's Word except what is read out in church; and how scanty, in future, will be the provision made for these, who need it most, from the Life-giving Word.

Again, her more abundant reading of the plain Word of God has been hitherto a great and confessed advantage of the Services of the Church over those of dissenters; but the Commissioners appear to be bent on reducing this henceforth to a minimum. And further, this too great desire for curtailment often leads on to OBJECTION No. II., for it constantly happens that the whole sense and force of a passage is thus both weakened and obscured. A list is appended of 30 places in the new Lectionary in which this is more or less

the case. Surely, whenever there was any doubt on such a subject, the longer passage should have been preferred, in order to avoid even the appearance of garbling.

OBJECTION III.—A careful examination of the list of omissions of chapters formerly read, will show that a very considerable number have been struck out which contained warnings against sin, or which exhorted to confession and repentance: *e.g.* Joel 2. v. 1-20; while the number of similar passages that have been added in the new Lectionary is very small. Is the love of speaking smooth things to pervade even the Church's Lectionary for the future? See the appended list of such omissions at page 13.

OBJECTION IV.—The following chapters are entirely struck out:—Exodus 13, 16, 17, which narrate the miracles of the pillar of fire and the cloud going before the Israelites; also of their being fed with manna for 40 years, and supplied with water from the rock. Deuteronomy 8 is similarly treated on the 5th Sunday after Easter, which contained a recapitulation of the same miracles: and on the 1st Sunday after Trinity, if the new Lesson taken from Joshua 5 (about Jericho) had begun a single verse earlier, mention would have been made of the ceasing of the manna. On the same Sunday Joshua 10 is struck out, which tells how the sun and moon stood still at Joshua's command. It is true that four new miracles have been added at the same period, as if to make up for the loss of these four old ones: viz., the budding of Aaron's rod; the healing by looking on the brazen serpent; the miraculous passing through Jordan; and the taking of Jericho: but, surely, the first four are very much more important and more worthy to be retained, being expressly referred to by our Lord in St. John 6, and by St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 10, as types of the Christian's sacramental feeding on Christ Himself. Or could it be that, being all of them miracles of nature, they seemed to the Commissioners to offend the quasi-scientific prejudices of the day?

OBJECTION V.—This is undoubtedly the most inexcusable of all the alterations introduced by the Commissioners, concerning the Easter Lessons. Surely the old Lessons were as well selected and as suitable for that season as any could possibly be; and yet not one of them has been allowed to remain in its former place: Hebrews 4 has been transferred from Easter Eve to Ascension; Romans 6 and Acts 2, v. 22, have been removed from Easter Day; Acts 3 is struck out *both* on Easter Monday and on St. Peter's Day; and Easter Monday has also lost St. Matthew 28, v. 10-20, narrating the story made up by the chief priests and the guard set over our Saviour's tomb. Then, on Easter Tuesday, 1 Corinthians 15, is struck out, and only the 1st part of it, as far as v. 28, is re-inserted on the following Sunday. Here, then, we lose the chief parts of the two most doctrinal chapters in the whole Bible on this subject—Romans 6 and 1 Corinthians 15—the foundation of the whole Christian doctrine of the Resurrection; and we lose also, in Acts 2 and 3, the most important testimony of St. Peter himself to the truth of the Resurrection, as well as that of Psalm 16, quoted by him in the former chapter, with especial reference to the Resurrection of our Lord's human body. Surely henceforth this central doctrine of our faith—the Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—will be presented in a very obscured and mutilated way to our congregations.

A few other objectionable alterations may be noted in conclusion. On the 6th Sunday in Lent, Hebrews 5, v. 1-11, is erased, speaking of the Atonement offered by Christ, and of the nature of His Priesthood. On Ascension Day, Ephesians 4, v. 1-17, is transferred to Trinity Sunday, although the chief subject of the passage, viz., the gifts procured for the Church by her Lord's Ascension, is clearly most suitable to the former festival. In Holy Week, St. John 11, v. 45-57, has disappeared, containing that most remarkable prophecy of Caiaphas on the death of Christ.

List of passages where the subject has been weakened or obscured (chiefly) through too much abbreviation—to illustrate Objection II.

On Circumcision.

Gen. 17, v. 1-9 omitted. Establishment of the covenant with Abraham.

1st Sun. in Lent.

Gen. 19, v. 1-11 omitted. Makes v. 12 a very abrupt beginning.

2nd ditto.

Gen. 27, v. 41-46 omitted. Jacob's fear of his brother—the very cause of his flight.

1st Sun. after Trinity.

Joshua 3, v. 7

to chap. 4, v. 15.

—— 5, v. 13

to chap. 6, v. 21.

} Verse 5 or v. 1 would have been a better beginning.
 } Verse 18 would be the proper ending: Jordan flowing back again.
 } If it had begun at v. 12, the ceasing of the manna would have been mentioned.
 } Should have gone to the end of the chapter: conclusion of the story of Rahab.

2nd ditto.

Judges 6, v. 11-40.

Should have begun at v. 1: all the chapter being about the Midianites.

3rd ditto.

Ruth 1.

Why this chapter only? Chapter 4, at least, required. See 4, v. 17.

1 Sam. 2, v. 27-36 omitted. Prophecy against the house of Eli: the proper introduction to chapter 4.

5th ditto.

1 Sam. 15, v. 24-35 omit.

Samuel refuses Saul's pretended repentance: Samuel slays Agag.

9th ditto.

1 Kings 10, v. 25-29.

Better have gone to the end of the chapter: horses and chariots were forbidden to the Jews.

12th ditto.

2 Kings 4, v. 8-38.

Why omit Elisha's other miracles in this chapter?

13th Sun. after Trinity.

2 Kings 6, v. 1-24.

7.

Omission of last part of chap. 6, which forms a necessary introduction to chap. 7.

Ascension.

2 Kings 2, v. 1-16.

Why are v. 16 and 17 omitted? The search after Elijah's body.

Epiphany.

Isaiah 49, v. 1-13 omitted. The very subject of the day—Christ a Light to the Gentiles.

Ash Wednesday.

Isa. 58, v. 13 & 14 omitted. Self-denial in keeping the Sabbath: very suitable to the season.

16th Sun. after Trinity.

Ezek. 13, v. 17-23 omitted. On the same subject as the rest of the chapter.

18th ditto.

Ezek. 24, v. 1-14 omitted. Ditto.

Holy Week.

Dan. 9, v. 1-20 omitted. Confession of sin: very suitable to the season.

Easter Week.

Canticles 2, v. 10-17.

The omission of v. 8 & 9 spoils this most beautiful passage, for they are ever interpreted to refer to the Incarnation.

Ascension and 22nd Sun. after Trinity.

Dan. 7, v. 1-8 omitted.

Vision of the four beasts: continually referred to in the rest of the chapter.

20th Sun. after Trinity.

Joel 2, v. 1-20 omitted.

Plagues of locusts: same objection as last.

Epiphany.

St. Luke 3, v. 1-15 omitted. St. John preaching repentance—why omitted?

Holy Week.

St. John 13, v. 36-38 om. Prophecy of St. Peter's denial: very wantonly omitted.

Circumcision.

Rom. 2, v. 1-17 omitted. Same subject as in the latter part of the chapter.

Easter Eve.

Rom. 6, v. 14-23 omitted. Close connection between the first and the last parts of the chapter.

Easter Monday.

St. Matt. 28, v. 10-20 omit. Why omitted? A short chapter altogether.

Whitsuntide.

Rom. 8, v. 18-26 omitted. On the Intercession of the Holy Spirit : should have been added.

1 Cor. 12, v. 14-26 omit. On the Body of Christ : not separable from the rest of the chapter.

Circumcision.

Coloss. 2, v. 1-8, and v. 18-23 omitted. } Should have begun at v. 5, and gone on to v. 19, or even to the end of the chapter.

Ash Wednesday.

Heb. 12, v. 1 & 2 omitted. These two verses form the best introduction to the rest.

N.B.—This List might have been much enlarged if similar instances had been added from the new Lessons for Saints' Days.

List of omitted passages on sin, justice of God, &c., to illustrate
Objection III.

Genesis 19, v. 1-11.	Behaviour of the Sodomites: omitted also in the Daily Lectionary.
——— 34.	History of Dinah, ditto ditto
Exodus 20.	The Ten Commandments.
——— 32.	The apostasy of Israel at Sinai: their punishment.
Numbers 25.	Zimri slain for marrying a Canaanitess.
Deuteronomy 7.	On not sparing the Canaanites.
——— 13.	All idolatrous Jews to be slain.
Joshua 23.	To avoid all dealing with the Canaanites.
1 Samuel 2, v. 27-36.	Prophecy against Eli's house.
——— 15, v. 24-35.	Samuel and Saul: Agag slain by Samuel.
2 Kings 2, v. 16-25.	Elisha's curse on the children.
*Proverbs 2.	Special warnings against sin.
Isaiah 59.	Denunciations of the sins of the Jews, and their punishment.
——— 64.	Man's natural corruption: God's wrath: and His mercy.
Daniel 9, v. 1-20.	Confession of sins for the people.
Joel 2, v. 1-20.	Call to public confession, &c.
Ezekiel 13, v. 17-23.	On false prophetesses, and preaching smooth things.
——— 20.	Rebellions of the Jews, God's punishments, &c.
——— 24, v. 1-15.	Woe upon Jerusalem for its sins.
Romans 2, v. 1-17.	Against sin, hypocrisy, &c.
St. Luke 3, v. 1-15.	St. John's preaching of repentance.
St. John 13, v. 36-38.	Christ's prophecy of St. Peter's denial.
Romans 6.	On dying to sin, &c.
1 Cor. 12, v. 14-27.	Against schism, &c. (<i>Whit Sunday.</i>)

* N.B.—Prov. 1 is to be read only on 5th Sunday after Epiphany. j

ADDITIONS ON FESTIVALS, &c.

Ash Wednesday.

- Isaiah 58, v. 1-13. On the best way of fasting: almsgiving, &c.
 Jonah 3. The repentance of Nineveh.
 St. Mark 2, v. 13-23. The children to fast when the bridegroom is gone.
 Heb. 12, v. 3-18. God chastises in love: Esau's repentance rejected.

6th Sun. in Lent.

- St. Luke 19, v. 28-48. Christ's entry into Jerusalem.
 ——— 20, v. 9-21. Parable of the wicked husbandmen.

Holy Week.

- Lament. 1, v. 1-15. Jerusalem punished for sin: Christ afflicted for His people.
 ——— 2, v. 13-22. Misery of Jerusalem.
 ——— 3. Lamentation: confession of sin, &c.
 ——— 4, v. 21 & 22. The miseries of Zion.
 St. John, chaps. 14-17. Our Lord's last conversations: and His intercessory prayer.

Easter Eve.

- Hosea 5, v. 8, to } A prophecy of Christ's resurrection on the third
 chap. 6, v. 4. } day, &c.
 Romans 6, v. 1-14. To die with Christ.

Easter Day.

- Rev. 1, v. 10-19. Our Lord in glory.
 ——— 2. The Lamb in heaven: adored by the angels.
 St. John 20, v. 11-19. Mary at the sepulchre.

OMISSIONS ON FESTIVALS, &c.

Circumcision.

- Gen. 17 v. 1-9. Covenant made with Abraham: Abraham to be the father of many nations.
- Rom. 2, v. 1-17. God's judgment against sin: His law written in the hearts of all men.
- Col. 2, v. 1-8, and v. 18-23. } To be rooted, &c., in Christ, and to walk in Him.
 } To hold fast to Christ as the Head and the Life of His Body.

Epiphany.

- Isaiah 49, v. 1-13, } Christ to be a Light to the Gentiles.
 and v. 24-26. } Redemption from their enemies.
- St. Luke 3, v. 1-15. St. John Baptist preaching near Jordan.

6th Sun. in Lent.

- Heb. 5, v. 1-11. Christ our high priest: His Atonement, and Perfection through suffering.

Holy Week.

- Daniel 9, v. 1-20. Daniel's confession of sin for the people: and his prayer.
- Jeremiah 31. Restoration of Israel: Rachel weeping, &c.: Christ's miraculous conception: God's new covenant with His people, &c.
- St. John 11, v. 45-57. Caiaphas' prophecy about our Lord's death.
- 13, v. 36-38. Christ prophesies St. Peter's denial.

Easter Eve.

- Exodus 13. Sanctifying of the first-born: the ordinance of unleavened bread: the pillar of fire and the cloud.
- Hebrews 4. The entering into rest: Christ's intercession.

Easter Day.

- Romans 6. To die with Christ, and to rise again with Him.
- Acts 2, v. 22-47. St. Peter's testimony to Christ's resurrection: his quotation of Psalm 16.

ADDITIONS ON FESTIVALS.—*Continued.**Easter Week.*

- Exodus 15, v. 1-22. Song of triumph after the passage of the Red Sea.
 Canticles 2, v. 10-17. The call of Christ to His church: her willing response; and prayer for His abiding presence.
 2 Kings 13, v. 14-22. A miracle worked by Elisha's dead body.
 Ezekiel 37, v. 1-15. Vision of the resurrection of dry bones.
 St. John 21. Miraculous draught of fishes: Christ's charge to St. Peter.

1st Sun. after Easter.

- St. John 20, v. 24-30. St. Thomas's unbelief.
 1 Cor. 15, v. 1-29. Appearances of Christ after His resurrection, &c.

Ascension.

- Daniel 7, v. 9-15. Vision of the Ancient of Days.
 Hebrews 4. The entering into rest: intercession of Christ.

Whit Sunday.

- Rom. 8, v. 1-18. To walk after the Spirit: presence of Christ and the Holy Spirit with the Church: our adoption through the Spirit.
 Galatians 5, v. 16-26. Comparison of walking in the flesh and in the Spirit.
 Ezekiel 36, v. 25-38. Prophecy of the outpouring of the Spirit, and its effects.

Whitsuntide.

- Joel 2, v. 21-32. Prophecy of the outpouring of the Spirit.
 Micah 4, v. 1-8. Spread of Christ's Church: peace on earth.
 1 Corinthians 13. On charity, as a gift of the Holy Spirit.

Trinity Sunday.

- Isaiah 6, v. 1-11. Vision of the Seraphim: their song of adoration.
 Rev. 1, v. 1-9. The Holy Trinity: Christ's future coming.
 Ephesians 4, v. 1-17. Unity of the Spirit: gifts to the Church through Christ's ascension, &c.

OMISSIONS ON FESTIVALS.—*Continued.**Easter Week.*

Acts 3.	Healing of the lame man by the Apostles: St. Peter's second sermon on the resurrection.
1 Cor. 15.	On the doctrine of the resurrection, &c.
Exodus 16.	Miracle of the manna.
———— 17.	Water from the rock: power of the lifting up of Moses' hands.
———— 20.	The Ten Commandments.
———— 32.	The apostasy at Sinai: its punishment.

Ascension.

2 Kings 2, v. 16-25.	Search for Elijah's body: Elisha's denunciation of the children, &c.
Ephesians 4, v. 1-17.	Unity of the Spirit: gifts to the Church through Christ's ascension, &c.

Whit Sunday.

Acts 10, v. 34-48.	The Holy Ghost descends on Cornelius and his company.
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Whitsuntide.

1 Sam. 19, v. 18-24.	Saul among the prophets.
1 Cor. 12, v. 14-27.	The body of Christ and its members: against schism, &c.
1 Cor. 14, v. 1-26.	On the gifts of tongues, prophecy, &c.

Trinity Sunday.

1 John 5.	Containing the interpolated verse on the Trinity.
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ADDITIONS—SUNDAY LESSONS.

Advent and Epiphany.

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|------------------|---|
| Isaiah 4. | A prophecy of Christ's kingdom. |
| —— 23, v. 5-19. | Exhortations: "line upon line," &c.: Christ the sure foundation. |
| —— 33, v. 2-23. | Warnings: the torments of hell: the blessedness of heaven. |
| —— 35. | The kingdom of Christ: its effects upon men. |
| —— 40. | Jesus Christ the Shepherd: God's Almighty power, &c. |
| —— 42. | Christ suffering: His healing office, &c. |
| —— 52, v. 13-15. | Introduction to chap. 53. |
| —— 54. | Christ's Church to include the Gentiles: God will comfort His people. |
| —— 61. | Christ anointed by the Spirit to heal, &c. |
| —— 62. | The Church of the Gentiles: its future flourishing. |

5th Sun. after Epiph.

- | | |
|-------------|--------------------|
| Proverbs 8. | The wisdom of God. |
|-------------|--------------------|

4th ditto.

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Job, chaps. 27, 28, 29. | The fate of the wicked: the Source of wisdom: Job's lamentation for his former happiness. |
|-------------------------|---|

Septuagesima.

- | | |
|---------|---|
| Job 38. | God's reproof to Job, convincing him of his ignorance of the secrets of nature. |
|---------|---|

Sexagesima.

- | | |
|------------|-------------------------------|
| Genesis 3. | Noah's coming out of the Ark. |
|------------|-------------------------------|

Quinquagesima.

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| Genesis 13. | Lot's choice of Sodom: God's promises to Abraham. |
|-------------|---|

1st Sun. in Lent.

- | | |
|-------------|------------------------------|
| Genesis 23. | Abraham buys a burial-place. |
|-------------|------------------------------|

2nd ditto.

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| Genesis 28. | Jacob leaves home: his vision on the way. |
| —— 32. | His return home: he meets and wrestles with the angel. |

OMISSIONS—SUNDAY LESSONS.

Advent and Epiphany.

- Isaiah 30, v. 27-33. God's wrath : Tophet.
 — 37. About Hezekiah : destruction of the Assyrian army.
 — 41. God's defence of His people.
 — 46. Against idolatry : a prophecy about Cyrus.
 — 56. No respect of persons with God : and against blind watchmen.
 — 59. Warnings about sin, &c. : redemption promised to the holy.
 — 64. A lamentation : God's goodness to men : their corruption.

1st Sun. in Lent.

- Genesis 19, v. 1-11. Behaviour of the Sodomites.
 — 22, v. 20-24. Names of Abraham's nephews.

2nd ditto.

- Genesis 27, v. 41-46. Jacob prepares to flee from Esau.
 — 34. History of Dinah.

ADDITIONS : SUNDAY LESSONS.— *Continued.**3rd Sunday in Lent.*

Genesis 37.

——— 40.

Joseph's dreams : sold by his brethren.

He interprets dreams in prison.

5th ditto.

Exodus 6, v. 1-14.

God's promise to Moses to deliver Israel.

6th ditto.

Exodus 11.

Moses threatens the death of the first-born.

1st Sun. after Easter.

Numbers 17, v. 1-12. Aaron's rod buds.

2nd ditto.

Numbers 20.

Disobedience of Moses : death of Aaron.

——— 21.

Plague of fiery serpents, &c. : defeat of the Amorites, &c.

Sunday after Ascension.

Deuteronomy 34.

Death of Moses.

Joshua 1.

Joshua appointed leader.

1st Sun. after Trinity.

Joshua 3, v. 7

to chap. 4, v. 15. }

The miraculous passage of the Israelites through Jordan.

Joshua 5, v. 13

to chap. 6, v. 21. }

Jericho taken.

Joshua 24.

Recapitulation of God's mercies to Israel, &c. : death of Joshua.

2nd ditto.

Judges 6, v. 11-40. History of Gideon.

3rd ditto.

1 Sam. 4, v. 19-22. Death of Eli and his sons.

4th ditto.

Ruth 1.

5th ditto.

1 Samuel 16.

David anointed by Samuel : chosen to play before Saul,

OMISSIONS: SUNDAY LESSONS.—*Continued.**2nd Sun. after Easter.*

Numbers 25. Zimri slain by Phinehas for marrying a Midianite.

4th ditto.

Deuteronomy 7. Israel commanded not to spare any of the Canaanites.

5th ditto.

Deuteronomy 8. Recapitulation of the miracles of the manna, &c.

Sunday after Ascension.

Deuteronomy 12. Against idolatry: Israel commanded to worship God in one place.

———— 13. All idolatrous Israelites to be cut off.

1st Sun. after Trinity.

Joshua 10. The sun and moon stand still.

———— 23. Joshua's last exhortation to shun the Canaanites wholly.

3rd ditto.

1 Sam. 2, v. 27-36. God's warning to Eli: a prophecy against his house.

5th ditto.

1 Sam., 15, v. 24-35. Samuel rejects Saul's repentance: slays Agag.

ADDITIONS: SUNDAY LESSONS.—*Continued.**6th Sunday after Trinity.*

2 Samuel 18. Death of Absalom.

7th ditto.

1 Chron. 21. David's numbering of the people, &c.
 ——— 22. David's charge to Solomon to build the temple.
 ——— 28, v. 1-21. The same continued: special directions given.

8th ditto,

1 Chron. 29, v. 9-29. Solomon appointed to be David's successor: death of David.
 2 Chron. 1. Wisdom granted to Solomon: his wealth, &c.

9th ditto.

1 Kings 3. Wisdom given to Solomon: his judgment about the two children.
 ——— 10, v. 1-25. Queen of Sheba visits Solomon: his wealth.
 ——— 11, v. 1-15. Solomon's fall.
 ——— 11, v. 26-43. Jeroboam called by Ahijah to be over the ten tribes.

10th ditto.

1 Kings 12. Rehoboam's answer to the people: rebellion of the ten tribes.

12th ditto.

2 Kings 2, v. 1-16. Elijah taken up to heaven.
 ——— 4, v. 8-38. The Shunamite's son restored to life.

13th ditto.

2 Kings 6, v. 1-24. More miracles worked by Elisha.
 ——— 7. Elisha foretells a miraculous deliverance from the Syrians.

14th ditto.

2 Kings 13. Oppression of Israel by Hazael and others: death of Elisha: a miracle worked by his dead body.

16th ditto.

2 Chron. 36. The captivity at Babylon: Cyrus' decree for the restoration of the Jews.

OMISSIONS : SUNDAY LESSONS.—*Continued.**6th Sunday after Trinity.*

2 Sam. 12, v. 24-31. Birth of Solomon : Rabbah taken.

—— 19. David's return to Jerusalem after the death of Ab-salom.

7th ditto.

2 Samuel 21. Saul's descendants sacrificed by the Gibeonites : battles with the Philistines.

—— 24. David's numbering of the people.

10th ditto.

1 Kings 22, v. 41-53. Jehoshaphat's reign : wreck of his fleet.

12th ditto.

2 Kings 10, v. 32-36. Hazael ravages Israel.

13th ditto.

2 Kings 23, v. 31-37. Josiah's sons, &c.

16th ditto.

Ezekiel 13, v. 17-23. Against false prophetesses, and the preaching of smooth things.

18th ditto.

Ezekiel 20. Rebelliousness of the Jews : God's punishments and His promises.

—— 24, v. 1-15. Woe to Jerusalem.

ADDITIONS : SUNDAY LESSONS.—*Continued.*

20th Sunday after Trinity.

- Ezekiel 34. Against careless shepherds : God's care for His afflicted flock : the kingdom of Christ.
 ——— 37. The vision of the resurrection of dry bones.
 Daniel 1. Daniel's youth at Babylon.

21st ditto.

- Daniel 4. Nebuchadnezzar's dream, and Daniel's interpretation.
 ——— 5. Belshazzar's feast.

22nd ditto.

- Daniel 7, v. 9-28. Vision of the Ancient of Days.
 ——— 12. Revelation of the appointed times—1,290 days.

23rd ditto.

- Hosea 14. God's mercy to the penitent.
 Joel 3, v. 9-21. God's judgments : His future deliverance of His people.

24th ditto.

- Amos 3. Warnings to Israel.
 ——— 5. To seek God : against hypocrisy.
 ——— 9. God's judgments : future restoration of His people.

25th ditto.

- Micah 4, & 5 to v. 8. Christ's Church : prophecy of His birth at Bethlehem.
 ——— 7. Man's corruption : trust of the Church in God's mercy.

26th ditto.

- Habakkuk 3. Psalm of Habakkuk : God's majesty.
 Zephaniah 3. God's reproof to His people : their future restoration.

27th ditto.

- Haggai 2, v. 1-10. Presence of Christ in the second Temple.
 Malachi 3. Prophecy of St. John Baptist : and on tithes.
 ——— 4. The future judgment : Christ the Sun of Righteousness.
 Eccclus. 11 & 12. Precepts.

OMISSIONS : SUNDAY LESSONS.—*Continued.*

20th Sunday after Trinity.

Joel 2, v. 1-21.

Plague of locusts : the call to public confession, &c.

22nd to 26th ditto.

Proverbs 2.

_____ 12.

_____ 13.

_____ 14.

_____ 16.

_____ 17.

_____ 19.

Against uncleanness.

General Precepts.

N.B.—Proverbs 1, 3, 9, 11, 15, are only to be read on the 5th and 6th Sundays after Epiphany, and will therefore be very seldom heard.

ADDITIONS—LESSONS FOR SAINTS' DAYS.

St. Andrew.

Isaiah 54.

Christ's Church to include the Gentiles: God's mercy and kindness to her.

—— 65, v. 1-17.

Calling of the Gentiles: rejection of the Jews for their wickedness.

John 1, v. 35-43.

The call of St. Andrew and St. Peter.

——12, v. 20-42.

Greeks desire to see Christ: He foretells His death, &c.

St. Thomas.

Isaiah 35.

The blessed results of Christ's kingdom: healing, holiness, and peace.

Job 42, v. 1-7.

Job's confession of his foolish speech.

John 20, v. 19-24.

Christ gives authority to bind and loose.

——14, v. 1-8.

St. Thomas asks which is the way.

St. Stephen.

Genesis 4, v. 1-11.

Cain and Abel.

2 Chron. 24, v. 15-23.

Stoning of Zechariah.

Acts 8, v. 1-9.

Saul persecuting: St. Philip at Samaria.

St. John the Evangelist.

Isaiah 6.

Vision of heavenly worship: judicial blindness on the people.

Exodus 33, v. 9-23.

God talking with Moses in the tabernacle: promises of His presence.

John 13, v. 23-36.

St. John at the Last Supper: the new command given.

Holy Innocents.

Baruch 4, v. 21-31.

Exhortation to patience.

Conversion of St. Paul.

Isaiah 49, v. 1-13.

Christ's Church among the Gentiles.

Jeremiah 1, v. 1-11.

Jeremiah commissioned and inspired by God.

Galat. 1, v. 11-24.

St. Paul's account of himself after his conversion.

Purification of St. Mary.

Exodus 13, v. 1-17.

Sanctification of the first-born: feast of unleavened bread,

Haggai 2, v. 1-10.

The greater glory of the second Temple.

OMISSIONS—LESSONS FOR SAINTS' DAYS.

St. Andrew.

Proverbs 20.

——— 21.

St. Thomas.

Proverbs 23.

——— 24.

St. Stephen.

Acts 7, v. 1-55.

Proverbs 28.

Ecclesiasticus 4.

St. Stephen's defence of himself before the Jews.

St. John the Evangelist.

Ecclesiasticus 5.

——— 6.

Revelations 22.

Vision of heavenly things : the future recompence of all people : God's Word not to be tampered with.

Holy Innocents.

Wisdom 1.

Conversion of St. Paul.

Acts 22, v. 1-22.

——— 26, v. 21-32.

Wisdom 5.

——— 6.

St. Paul's account of his conversion.

St. Paul before Festus and Agrippa.

Purification of St. Mary.

Wisdom 9.

——— 12.

ADDITIONS: LESSONS FOR SAINTS' DAYS.— *Continued.**St. Matthias.*

Isaiah 22, v. 15-25. Eliakim put in Shebna's place, a type of Christ, &c.
 1 Samuel 2, v. 27-36. The warning sent to Eli.

Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Isaiah 52, v. 7-13. The blessings of the preaching of the gospel: holiness in God's messengers.
 Genesis 3, v. 1-16. The Fall.

St. Mark.

Isaiah 62, v. 6-12. Christ's Church. (Why is the first part omitted?)
 Ezekiel 1, v. 1-15. Vision of the winged creatures.

St. Philip and St. James.

Isaiah 61. The office of Christ: the Gentiles to be God's people.
 Zechariah 4. The duration of Zerubbabel's foundation.

St. Barnabas.

Deut. 33, v. 1-12. Moses' last blessing of the Israelites.
 Nahum 1. God's power, goodness, and justice.
 Acts 4, v. 31-37. All things in common to the Church.

*St. John Baptist.**St. Peter.*

Ezekiel 3, v. 4-15. Mission of Ezekiel: his vision of angels.
 Zechariah 3. Joshua a type of the restoration of the Church: prophecy of the Branch.
 John 21, v. 15-23. The three-fold charge to St. Peter.

St. James.

2 Kings 1, v. 1-15. Elijah calls down fire from heaven upon his enemies.
 Jeremiah 26, v. 8-16. Jeremiah persecuted by the people.
 Luke 9, v. 51-57. St. James and St. John ask to call down fire upon the Samaritans.

St. Bartholomew.

Genesis 28, v. 10-18. Jacob's dream.
 Deut. 18, v. 15-22. Our Lord a prophet like to Moses.

OMISSIONS : LESSONS FOR SAINTS' DAYS.—*Continued.**St. Matthias.*

Wisdom 19.

Ecclesiasticus 1.

Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Ecclesiasticus 2.

———— 3.

St. Mark.

Ecclesiasticus 4.

———— 5.

St. Philip and St. James.

Ecclesiasticus 7.

———— 9.

St. Barnabas.

Acts 14, v. 1-7.

St. Paul and St. Barnabas at Iconium.

———15, v. 1-36.

The first council at Jerusalem.

Ecclesiasticus 10.

———— 12.

St. John Baptist.

Malachi 3, v. 7-18.

Robbing God of His tithes: the future reward of the good.

St. Peter.

Acts 3.

Healing of the lame man: St. Peter's second sermon.

———4, v. 1-7.

The Apostles brought before the council.

———4, v. 23-37.

Their thanksgiving when released: all things common among the first converts.

Ecclesiasticus 15.

———— 19.

St. James.

Ecclesiasticus 21.

———— 22.

St. Bartholomew.

Ecclesiasticus 24.

———— 29.

ADDITIONS : LESSONS FOR SAINTS' DAYS.—*Continued.**St. Matthew.*

1 Kings 19, v. 15-21. Elijah commanded to anoint Jehu and Elisha.

1 Chron. 29, v. 1-20. Offerings of the people for the temple : David's psalm and prayer.

St. Michael and All Angels.

Rev. 14, v. 14-20. The future harvest of the world.

St. Luke.

Isaiah 55. Catholicity of Christ's Church : God's mercy.

Ecclus. 38, v. 1-15. All healing is from God : prayer and amendment are suitable to seasons of sickness.

St. Simon and St. Jude.

Isaiah 28, v. 9-17. Men must be taught over and over again : Christ is the sure foundation.

Jeremiah 3, v. 12-19. God's promises to the penitent.

There is not much to observe upon in this list. The system of curtailing the Lessons is again carried to an extreme. Out of 47 new (or partially new) Lessons, 30 average only 8 verses each, and 19 only 7 : and as in the first list, so here, this passion for curtailment tends frequently to obscure the sense—as in the Morning First Lesson for St. Mark's Day, Isaiah 62, v. 6, the addition of the first 5 verses would certainly have improved the sense of the remainder ; and even then, the whole Lesson would have consisted only of 12 verses. Some changes seem to have been made for change's sake, and not always for the better : as on the Conversion of St. Paul, why should Galatians 1, v. 11, be considered more suitable for the day than the old Lesson, Acts 22, v. 1-22 ? The erasure of Acts 3 on St. Peter's Day has been already noticed. Another passage, which has been very infelicitously struck out of

OMISSIONS : LESSONS FOR SAINTS' DAYS.—*Continued.**St. Matthew.*

Ecclesiasticus 35.

———— 38.

St. Michael and All Angels.

Acts 21, v. 1-4, and	} St. Peter taken by Herod. }	None of these verses should
v. 18 & 19.		
St. Jude, v. 6-16.	The fallen angels, and those like them.	

St. Luke.

Job. 1.

The first part of Job's history.

Ecclesiasticus 51.

St. Simon and St. Jude.

Job 24.

The wicked flourish, but only for a time.

— 25.

Man cannot be justified before God.

— 42.

End of Job's history.

the Sunday Lessons, 1 Sam. 2, v. 27-36, containing the warning sent through a prophet to Eli, has with an equal lack of good reason been stuck into this present list on St Matthias' Day. The Book of Job has been (except 6 verses) erased from this list; and also, with two slight exceptions, all the Apocryphal Books. Surely, in making this last recommendation, the Commissioners have overstepped their authority. Why should these Books have been so wholly vetoed out of deference to a party which was certainly in a minority (and probably a small minority) on this question, especially when it is remembered that hardly any of them ever observe these minor festivals? Why could not the Commissioners at least have allowed the option of reading either the old or the new Lessons on these days, in accordance with their own principle enunciated in par. 8 of their Report on the subject of the new Lectionary?

PART II.

ON

THE DAILY LECTIONARY.

In the report of the Ritual Commissioners, printed at the head of their new Lectionary, these words occur:—"We have not felt ourselves justified in recommending any omission in the passages selected." But in spite of this profession they have contrived, by disregarding entirely the old division of chapters, to omit everywhere passages, longer or shorter, almost at their pleasure. In their new daily Lectionary, especially, they have cut and carved the Bible unsparingly; so that, in many parts, the new Lessons are really only selections from the written Word, and not that Word itself. Of the extent to which this principle has been carried it would be impossible to give an adequate idea without reprinting, in full, the whole of the new Lectionary; but some notion of it may be formed from the following statement of results:—Of the whole of the Old Testament (exclusive of the books of Cant. and 1 and 2 Chron., and exclusive also of the Apocrypha), the old Lectionary omitted to read 117 entire chapters, and of *parts* of chapters only *one*: the new Lectionary omits 180 entire chapters, and parts of 132 others—the larger portion of the entire chapters omitted being in both cases from the books of Exod., Numb., Levit., Deut., Josh., Jerem., and Ezek.; but the omitted *parts* of chapters occurring indiscriminately in nearly every book. The book of Proverbs is the largest contributor under this head, more than one-half of its chapters (17 out of 31) being henceforth appointed to be read only in part. It is evident, therefore, that the Ritual Commissioners have herein undertaken an important part of the great work of Bible revision—viz., that of re-dividing the present chapters: a task not only beyond their commission, but also beyond their ability. In-

stances in plenty might be found, both in their Sunday and daily Lectionary, which would convict them either of great carelessness (arising, perhaps, from haste), or else of incompetency for this task of re-dividing the Bible into sections and chapters. To take a single example—Cant. 2, v. 10, is one of their new Lessons for Easter week; but v. 8 of that chapter has ever been held by commentators, both ancient and modern, to be the proper beginning of that section of the Book: with v. 8 commences the second of the seven parts into which the whole Book is divided; and to begin their extract at v. 10 instead, is to spoil the sense of this most noble passage.*

It seems clear, on many accounts, that the revision of the Bible (*if* it is to take place), should precede the issuing of any new Lectionary. Certainly, if such revision is ever completed *and accepted* by the Church, an entirely new Lectionary will then be imperatively required, if only for the sake of convenience with regard to the calendar.

Considering now the new daily Lectionary on its own merits, as an entirely new selection of Lessons throughout the year (since all have been altered, more or less, from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31), we shall find with regard (1) to the reading of the Old Testament, that several chapters have been added from 2 Chron., and one from 1 Chron., with manifest advantage to the *clearness* of the history of the Jewish nation; for these added chapters furnish a much clearer account of the kingdom of Judah, from the time of Rehoboam *onwards*, than that contained in 2 Kings, inasmuch as it is not mixed up with the history of the kingdom of Israel at the same period. This greater clearness in the history has, however, been only obtained by a continual interchange of Lessons from 2 Chron. and 2 Kings during a considerable part of the month of June; as is seen in the following specimen, copied from the new Lectionary for June:

	<i>Matins.</i>	<i>Evensong.</i>
June 1.....	2 Kings, 13.....	2 Kings, 17 to v. 24.
„ 2.....	_____ 17 v. 24 ...	2 Chron., 12.
„ 3.....	2 Chron., 13	_____ 14.
„ 4.....	_____ 15	_____ 16 & 17 to v. 14.
„ 5.....	_____ 19	_____ 20 to v. 31.
„ 6.....	_____ 20 v. 31 & 21	_____ 22.
„ 7.....	_____ 23	_____ 24.
„ 8..	_____ 25	_____ 26 & 27.

* See Rev. J. L. GALTON on the Canticles, pp. 91, 92.

	<i>Matins.</i>	<i>Evensong.</i>
June 9.....	2 Chron., 28	2 Kings, 18 to v. 9.
„ 10.....	———— 29 v. 3 to 21.	2 Chron., 30 & 31 v. 1.
„ 11 <i>St. Barnabas.</i>		
„ 12.....	2 Kings, 18 v. 13 ...	2 Kings, 19 to v. 20.
„ 13.....	———— 19 v. 20 ...	———— 20.
„ 14.....	Isaiah 38 v. 9.....	2 Chron., 33.
„ 15.....	2 Kings, 22	2 Kings, 23 to v. 21.
„ 16.....	——— 23 v 21 to 24 v. 8	——— 24 v. 8 to 25 v. 8.
„ 17.....	———— 25 v. 8.....	Ezra 1 & 3.
„ 18.....	Ezra 4	———— 5.
	&c.	&c.

The above example furnishes a fair specimen of the interpretation which the Commissioners have put upon their own phrase of “not recommending any omission in the passages selected,”* as also of the somewhat puzzling form in which the Calendar will henceforth be presented to the people.

A general examination of the different chapters and parts of chapters, omitted by the Commissioners in their new list of *selected Lessons* from the Old Testament, discloses a good many subjects and passages for the omission of which it seems difficult to account. Thus with regard to the destruction and expulsion of the former inhabitants of Canaan by the chosen people (a subject which was also considerably shirked in the Sunday Calendar), six, if not more, rather important passages are excluded, viz.:—Numb. 33 v. 50, Deut. 20 v. 17, Josh. 8, Josh. 10 and 11, Judg. 1 and Judg. 3. The omission of the two last passages is the more remarkable, inasmuch as they expressly declare how imperfectly the Jews fulfilled the command given to them on this point, and the sins and sufferings into which, by consequence, they fell.

Another subject of avoidance, though not marked so strongly as in the Sunday Lectionary, is of texts which make plain mention of sins, and of their consequences: such as Gen. 9 v. 20, on the curse of Ham; chap. 19 v. 1-12, on the sin of the people of Sodom; chap. 34, about Dinah: Deut. 9, 12, 13, 19 v. 14, 21 v. 18, and 22, concerning the falling away at Sinai, idolatry, schism, injustice, oppression, perjury, violence, disobedience to parents, uncleanness, &c.: Numb. 31, a most unpardonable omission, concerning the death of Balaam: 17 greatly mangled chapters from Proverbs, each of them containing sundry warnings about particular sins:

* See especially the afternoon lesson for June 17, Ezra 1 & 3.

Hosea 6, on repentance, &c.: Isaiah 3, against the luxury of the Jewish women: and Jerem. 17, on keeping the Sabbath. Some of the above omissions are perhaps due to an excess of prudery on the part of the Commissioners, which has shewn itself almost absurdly in the exclusion of such other passages as Gen. 17, v. 23-27: c. 31, v. 25-36: Exodus 4, v. 24-27: and c. 20, v. 22-26. Surely they might have reflected that this bracketing of such verses would be the surest way to direct special attention to them.

We miss also a considerable number of passages which record remarkable visions, prophecies, and miracles: as Dan. 8, a vision of the ram and the goat, interpreted in the same chapter: of the future kingdoms of Media, Persia, Grecia, &c.: Jerem. 27, a prophecy of Nebuchadnezzar's triumph over Jerusalem: Jerem. 31 and 32, a somewhat similar prophecy: Jerem. 25, a prophecy of the future destruction of all nations; with many other prophecies uttered against the Gentile nations, such as Zech. 9, against Tyre and the Philistines: Isaiah 7, against Damascus and Samaria; and all those contained in chaps. 45-49 of Jeremiah. Also two signal instances of the miraculous deliverance of God's people from their enemies, in 1 Kings 20, and 2 Kings 3, are for some reason placed on the Commissioners' Index Expurgatorius. Finally, in accordance with their old prejudice against the chief miracles in the wilderness so strongly marked in their Sunday Calendar, they have excluded Deut. 29, v. 1-9, and Nehem. 9, v. 1-12, apparently for no other reason than that they both make special mention of those miraculous mercies.

Neither, again, is the historical connection improved by the exclusion of such chapters as Genesis 31, v. 25-36, on the history of Jacob; or of 1 Sam. 18, 25, 27, 29: 2 Sam. 2, 5, 8, 14, 22: and 1 Kings 1—all relating to the history of David. Among these, the loss of 1 Samuel 25, narrating the story of Nabal and Abigail, and 2 Samuel 22, containing David's Psalm of thanksgiving (Psalm 18), is especially to be regretted. The other historical chapters omitted are—1 Kings 9, about Solomon's navy going to Ophir, &c.: Ezra 6, containing Darius's new decree for the re-building of the Temple: Jerem. 37, on the prophet's imprisonment by the Jews: and Jerem. 40-44, narrating the history of the remnant of the Jews who escaped the captivity at Babylon.

A considerable number of chapters from the prophet Ezekiel have also been added to the Calendar, to its manifest improvement.

Finally, of the Apocryphal books, the Commissioners have retained only 13 entire chapters, and parts of 22 more, selected from the books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, with 2 from the book of Baruch, in place of the books of Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclus., Baruch, Bel and the Dragon, and Susannah, which in the old Lectionary were read either entire or with very few omissions. So strong an animus being thus displayed by the Commissioners against this whole portion of the Church's time-honoured Calendar, it is not wonderful to find evident marks of haste or indifference in their selection of the small remnant of those lessons from the Apocrypha that are left: as, for example, out of the first 6 lessons taken from Ecclus., 4 are mutilated chapters, and the subjects of the excluded parts in them are as follows:

- c. 1, v. 14 to end. Fear of God.
- c. 3, v. 1-17. To honour our parents.
- c. 4, v. 1-10. Not to despise the poor.
- c. 7, v. 1-27. Against presumption: fainting in prayer: bad company.
- c. 21 & 23. Are also very profitable chapters, but are totally excluded from the new Calendar.

These are merely examples of the Commissioners' method of selection. Doubtless many other similar cases might be found; but what REASON there could be for excluding such subjects as the above from the Lessons read in church is a problem that perhaps not even the Commissioners themselves could resolve.

2. On the reading of the New Testament:—

No parts of this have been excluded, except the genealogies in St. Matthew and St. Luke, and the 9th, 13th, and 17th chapters of Revelations. The other chapters of Revelations are an acceptable addition to the daily Lectionary. But the whole of the New Testament is to be read on an entirely new plan, which will be best understood from the following table.

	<i>Matins.</i>	<i>Evensong.</i>
Jan.	St. Matt.	Acts.
Feb.	St. Matt.	Acts.
	St. Mark.	Rom.
Mar.	St. Mark.	Rom.
	St. Luke.	2 Cor.

From this we see that from January to the middle of June the Gospels will be read at Matins: from January to July 6 the Acts and Epistles will be read at Evensong. Again, from June 15 to Dec. 16 the Acts and Epistles will be read at Matins: and from July

	<i>Matins.</i>	<i>Evensong.</i>	
Apr.	{ St. Luke.	2 Cor. to Coloss.	7 to Dec. 16 the Gospels will be read at Evensong: and from Dec. 17 to the end of the month the book of Revelations alone will be read at both services. The reason of this last arrangement is not apparent. It may have arisen from over-haste: but it cannot in any case be considered a good one. We observe also that the Acts are now to be read along with the Epistles, and not, as before, with the Gospels: one consequence of which will be that during the whole of January and half of February, and for full three-quarters of July, the Epistles will not be read at either service. The Gospels, however, will always be heard once a day, except from June 16 to July 5, and from Dec. 17 to Dec. 31. On this new plan, most of the New Testament will be read through twice in the year, instead of thrice, as before: and the book of Revelations once. In the New, as in the Old Testament, the present divisions of chapters have been very much altered by the Commissioners, often, no doubt, for the better: but still the whole scheme is open to the objection mentioned before, that in acting thus they have really undertaken a not unimportant part of the work of revising the present English translation of the Bible.
May	{ St. Luke.	Coloss. to St. John.	
June	{ St. John.	Heb. to Acts.	
July	{ Acts.	1 John. to Rom. 1.	
		St. Jude, and St. Matt.	
Aug.	{ Rom. 2.	St. Matt. to 1 Cor.	
Sep.	{ 1 Cor.	St. Mark to Ephes. 1.	
Oct.	{ Ephes. 2.	St. Luke. to 2 Tim.	
Nov.	{ 2 Tim.	St. Luke. to 1 Peter.	
Dec.	{ 1 Peter	St. John to Revelatn.	
		and Revelatn.	

On the whole it seems clear, that unless submitted to a careful, thorough, and above all, an impartial revision, this new Lectionary will be a loss, rather than a gain, as compared with the old. It has indeed been received with some amount of favour by one party in the Church on account of its almost total suppression of the Apocrypha, and by others for the sake of its universal abbreviation of

the Lessons: but it is a remarkable, yet most certain fact, that scarce any, if indeed *any*, even among the clergy, are at all aware of the nature or amount of the changes which it will introduce into our Church service. It would have been far better, at a time like the present, if the Commissioners had confined themselves to recommending a few obvious improvements in the old Lectionary, such as will occur to every one. But if a larger measure of reform seemed imperative, then a fresh set of Commissioners should have been specially chosen for the purpose, men of undoubted orthodoxy, in whom the Church could repose full confidence, sound scholars, well versed in ecclesiastical lore, and especially conversant with liturgies, both ancient and modern: to whom also Biblical criticism would have been no new or strange subject. And farther, it should have been the first object of such a Commission to acquaint themselves with the principle on which the present selection of Lessons was originally made; and at least to follow *some* kind of principle in their own selection. Whereas it is evident, on the most cursory inspection, that there is not the slightest shadow of any such principle to be found in the new Lectionary, unless indeed it can be called such, that the new is as different as possible from the old. How far the present Ritual Commissioners, as a body, can be held to possess the qualities and accomplishments required for the work of compiling an entirely new Lectionary, is a question that will be easily decided by any one who peruses the list of their names appended on the next page. Surely, of these, but a very small proportion could be supposed, even by themselves, to possess either the leisure or the qualifications required for so laborious a task.

Such being the incompetency of the body which has taken upon itself to reform the Church's Lectionary, and to subvert, at a blow, the labours of men far more learned and pains-taking than themselves, is it too much to hope that the Prime Minister, when he comes to understand what has been done, will remit the whole question for further consideration, and that he will allow the Church, of which he professes himself a faithful son, to have some real voice in the settling of a work so important as her own Lectionary?

In conclusion, one of the reasons that was urged very strongly last spring for the speedy settlement of the new Lectionary, deserves to be noticed here, if only as a warning against allowing questions like the present to be argued on any secondary grounds. It was alleged at that time that much distress did prevail, and would con-

tinue to prevail, among some of the workpeople connected with the printing and publishing trades on account of the unsettled state of this matter of the Lectionary. Now this whole representation was utterly delusive. Such a cause alone could never have produced any such effect. The real state of the case has leaked out since, and is now notorious to the whole of the publishing trade. A certain well-known firm of printers, employed in high quarters, had already, with the view of getting a start of all rivals, printed off, by anticipation, a large number of Prayer Books with the new Lectionary in place of the old. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ!* These were the real sufferers on whose behalf so much sympathy was invoked both in Parliament and in Convocation. Let us hope that the tale of their unmerited woes may not even yet prevail upon our rulers to relieve their distress, and to insert the thin end of the wedge into the Prayer Book, by forcing upon an unwilling Church this crude and hasty jumble, which the Ritual Commissioners term a Lectionary.

*Names of the Ritual Commissioners appended to their third report, presented
Jan. 12, 1870.*

A. C. Cantuar	J. Napier
M. G. Armagh	R. Phillimore
Stanhope	T. Twiss
Carnarvon	J. A. Smith
Harrowby	A. J. B. Beresford-Hope
Beauchamp	J. G. Hubbard
S. Winton	C. Buxton
C. St. David's	A. P. Stanley
C. J. Gloucester and Bristol	J. A. Jeremie
W. Chester	R. Payne Smith
H. Carlisle	H. Venn
Portman	W. G. Humphry
Ebury	R. Gregory
S. H. Walpole	T. W. Perry
	W. F. Kemp, <i>Secretary.</i>

BOOK 10

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